



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/422,339	10/21/1999	THOMAS G. WOOLSTON	11092-012001	5419

20985 7590 04/27/2006

FISH & RICHARDSON, PC
P.O. BOX 1022
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022

EXAMINER

GART, MATTHEW S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3625

DATE MAILED: 04/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/422,339	Applicant(s) WOOLSTON ET AL.	
	Examiner Matthew S. Gart	Art Unit 3625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-66 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-66 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 October 1999 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because the drawings filed on 10/21/1999 contain informal handwritten text and improper shading which may affect clarity once reproduced. Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsman outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 49-66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as being directed towards non-statutory subject matter.

Referring to claims 49-66. Claim 49 is directed to computer software, embodied in a tangible medium or in a propagated carrier signal or both. Claims that recite nothing but the physical characteristics of a form of energy, such as a frequency, voltage, or the strength of a magnetic field, define energy or magnetism, per se, and as such are nonstatutory natural phenomena. O'Reilly, 56 U.S. (15 How.) at 112-14. Moreover, it does not appear that a claim reciting a signal encoded with functional descriptive material falls within any of the categories of patentable subject matter set forth in §101. Claims 50-66 are dependent upon claim 49.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3-5, 10-27, 29-49 and 51-66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagoner (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2006/0074792) in view of Montero (U.S. Patent No. 6,133,912).

Referring to claim 1. Wagoner discloses an computer-implemented method for encouraging users of a computer network to access dynamic pricing information on the computer network, the method comprising:

- Distributing over the computer network to a first user of the computer network a modular computer program that displays a stream of dynamic pricing information collected from a plurality of sources on the computer network (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024, "...displaying one or more auction data for the one or more identified auctions in a scrolling ticker on a user terminal, the one or more auction data is a hypertext link to a first web page associated with the action data.");
- Receiving from the first user input identifying selected dynamic pricing information (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0101: "The program reads the text strings contained in the text file, and displays the text string contents in a scrolling ticker as a selectable hypertext link enabling access to a web page addressed by the associated URL."); and

- Communicating the dynamic pricing information selected by the first user to a second user for display at a modular computer program, executing on a computer system associated with the second user, that displays to the second user a stream of dynamic pricing information (Wagoner: at least 0103: “In another embodiment, the auction data may be displayed on a vehicle dealer terminal. The auction data may advantageously be stored on one or more storage mediums **108**. The vehicle dealer terminal is a terminal used by a vehicle dealer to access the Data Center system.”).

Wagoner does not expressly disclose presenting to the first user of the modular computer program an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network, the user-attractive resource is visually embedded within the stream of dynamic pricing information displayed by the modular computer program. Montero discloses presenting to the first user of the modular computer program an interactive visual indication of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network, the user-attractive resource is visually embedded within the stream of dynamic pricing information displayed by the modular computer program (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 12). Montero discloses a method wherein INFO servers continuously transmit information such as advertisements, news, messages, web pages, data packets, stock tickers, announcements, updates and like, to form a sequence of information. At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the method of Wagoner to have included the teachings of Montero as discussed above in order to continuously

display information without interfering with the display of selected data (Montero: at least column 3, lines 21-23).

Referring to claim 3. Wagoner further discloses a method comprising collecting dynamic pricing information from the computer network (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024).

Referring to claim 4. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the computer network comprises the Internet (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0049).

Referring to claim 5. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the computer network comprises a virtual private network (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024).

Referring to claim 10. Wagoner further discloses a method comprising causing the modular computer program to display the stream of dynamic pricing information collected from the computer network (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024).

Referring to claim 11. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the stream of dynamic pricing information that is displayed varies based on user input (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024, "...identifying the one or more auctions that satisfy the one or more filtering parameters.").

Referring to claim 12. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the stream of dynamic pricing information has a predetermined taxonomy, and wherein the user can selectively view different levels of the taxonomy (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0099).

Referring to claim 13. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the interactive visual indication comprises a glyph (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0101: "The

program reads the text strings contained in the text file, and displays the text string contents in a scrolling ticker as a selectable hypertext link enabling access to a web page addressed by the associated URL.”).

Referring to claim 14. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein the interactive visual indication comprises an interactive link to the user-attractive resource (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 42)

Referring to claim 15. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 14 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein the interactive link comprises a uniform resource locator tag (Montero: at least column 5, lines 60 to column 6, line 6)

Referring to claims 16-19. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein the user-attractive resource comprises advertisements, news, messages, web pages, data packets, stock tickers, announcements, updates and like, to form a sequence of information (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 12). Montero does not explicitly state that the advertisement (one of many user-attractive resources) type takes the form of a contest, a reward program or a coupon. However, the type of advertisement is claimed utilizing a “wherein clause” that does not relate back to or clarifies what is required by the claims. The wherein clauses of claims 16-19 merely states the result of a limitation in the claims and is therefore given little patentable weight. *See Texas Instruments Inc. v. International Trade Commission*, 26 USPQ2d

1010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); Griffin v. Bertina, 62 USPQ2d 1431 (Fed. Cir. 2002); Amazon.com Inc. v. Barnesandnoble.com Inc., 57 USPQ2d 1747 (Fed. Cir. 2001).

Referring to claim 20. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein the user-attractive resource comprises a multi-media presentation (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 12).

Referring to claim 21. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method comprising providing a user with access to the user-attractive resource upon sensing that the user selected the interactive visual indication (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 42).

Referring to claim 22. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein the modular computer program displays dynamic pricing information in a ticker display format (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024).

Referring to claim 23. Wagoner further discloses a method wherein a plurality of instances of the modular computer program are presented to a user concurrently (Wagoner: at least paragraph 0024).

Referring to claim 24. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 23 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein each of the plurality of instance of the modular computer program includes one or more associated visual indications of a user-attractive resource available on the computer network (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 42).

Referring to claim 25. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 24 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein each of the one or more visual indicators can be the same as or different from the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 42).

Referring to claim 26. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 24 as indicated supra. Montero further discloses a method wherein each of the one or more visual indicators can correspond to the same or different user-attractive resources as the visual indications on other instances of the modular computer program (Montero: at least column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 42).

Referring to claims 27 and 29-47. The limitations of claims 27 and 29-47 closely parallel those of claims 1, 3-5 and 10-26. Claims 27 and 28-47 are rejected under the same rationale as set forth above in claims 1, 3-5 and 10-26.

Referring to claim 48. The limitations of claim 48 closely parallel those of claim 1. Claim 48 is rejected under the same rationale as set forth above in claim 1.

Referring to claims 49 and 51-66. The limitations of claims 49 and 51-55 closely parallel those of claims 1, 3-5 and 10-26. Claims 49 and 51-66 are rejected under the same rationale as set forth in claims 1, 3-5 and 10-26.

Claims 2, 6-9, 28 and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagoner (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2006/0074792) in view of Montero (U.S. Patent No. 6,133,912) in further view of Bowman-Amuah (U.S. Patent No. 6,697,824).

Referring to claims 2, 28 and 50. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method, system and product according to independent claims 1, 27 and 49 as indicated supra. Neither Wagoner nor Montero disclose wherein the modular computer program comprises a Java-based applet. Bowman-Amuah discloses wherein a modular computer program comprises a Java-based applet (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 10, lines 12-21).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the method, system and product of Wagoner in view of Montero to have included the teachings of Bowman-Amuah as discussed above in order to improve client side performance (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 10, lines 12-21).

Referring to claim 6. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Bowman-Amuah discloses a method comprising pushing a copy of a modular computer program to one or more users of the computer network (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 37, lines 15-18).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the method, system and product of Wagoner in view of Montero to have included the teachings of Bowman-Amuah as discussed above

in order to enable an enterprise to reach and provide value to their customer outside of the traditional interactions (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 37, lines 24-35).

Referring to claim 7. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Bowman-Amuah discloses wherein distributing a modular computer program comprises enabling users of the computer network to pull a copy of a modular computer program (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 74, lines 19-29).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the method, system and product of Wagoner in view of Montero to have included the teachings of Bowman-Amuah as discussed above in order to enable an enterprise to reach and provide value to their customer outside of the traditional interactions (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 37, lines 24-35).

Referring to claims 8-9. Wagoner in view of Montero discloses a method according to claim 1 as indicated supra. Bowman-Amuah discloses wherein distributing a modular computer program comprises sending the modular computer program to a user of the computer network through an electronic mail system and an instant messaging system (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 53, lines 27-35).

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have modified the method, system and product of Wagoner in view of Montero to have included the teachings of Bowman-Amuah as discussed above in order to enable an enterprise to reach and provide value to their customer outside of the traditional interactions (Bowman-Amuah: at least column 37, lines 24-35).

Response to Amendment

Applicant's amendment dated 4/03/2006 has been received and entered. Claim 1 has been amended to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The rejection of claims 1-66 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, has been vacated.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-66 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew S. Gart whose telephone number is 571-273-3955. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeff Smith can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



MSG
Primary Examiner
April 18, 2006